

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x20 - "In the Stars."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE

The camera SHAKES, computer panels SPARK, smoke BILLOWS. A burned, smudgy hand grabs urgently at the helm panel, pulling the body up - it is DEZ, the *Even Odds* captain.

The ship shakes around him, under attack. He clammers back into the seat and quickly works the panels, desperately trying to get the ship out of harm's way.

Another SLAM - the ship shudders and rings like a bell as it's hit again. Dez turns to look at FACITY, his buxom Wadi exec, at the science panels.

DEZ

Fac! I need to know where they
are! I can't get us away if -

FAC

I don't know where they are! They
keep moving! Jumping around like
Rakhari springers. Every time I
think there's a gap we can run
through, they jump right into it
and shoot at us again. I can't
even tell if there is a they or
just an it.

The ship shakes again, a groan rumbling all through its spaceframe. Another panel blows. A couple of unfamiliar background faces are working other stations.

DEZ

What about Prees?

FACITY

(slaps comm panel)
Prees! Status!

2 THE WA

PREES, the Karemma engineer, staggers against the bucking ship. But that's the least of her worries, because the WA is erupting all around her. The peaceful cloudy white is gone, and instead the space is THROBBING with a fiery orange light, PULSING like an irregular heartbeat. The patches of colour that hang in mid-air are all on FIRE.

Prees dodges out of the way of one burst of flames and collapses to the "ground," but even that shifts and rolls under her, physically reacting to the attack on the ship.

PREES

I'm trying! But nothing works.
It's alive down here... and it's
going crazy!

3 INT. EVEN ODDS - CORRIDOR

The dog-like Aarruri PIF runs as fast as he can down the corridor. He winces against his damaged leg, slowing him down, but he pushes through it and keeps going.

He skids around a corner into another section of corridor. BRAD, FEG and TRIV are pounding along it towards Pif. The hulking Dosi female carries a heavy fire extinguisher device, the two tiny Ferengi males lugging the long coiled pipe behind. Pif dodges around them and keeps going.

BRAD

Pif! Where are you going? It's
this way!

Pif ignores her and keeps running. A section of a bulkhead BURSTS off its moorings and out into the corridor, letting a finger of white-orange Wa material leak out, reaching and flowing. Pif ignores it. He runs and runs...

4 INT. EVEN ODDS - PIF'S QUARTERS

The door opens and Pif dashes in. Inside, on the large pillow of their bed, is Pif's wife SETT and their six tiny green babies. The puppies are a bit older now, old enough to be aware of what's going on around them. Sett is trying her best to hug them to her chest, comfort them, but they still whine and whimper in fear.

SETT

Pif! You shouldn't be here!

PIF

No, Sett. You're my family. I
couldn't be anywhere else.

He jumps up onto the bed and huddles up with his family,
curling himself around to protect them. Pif and Sett both
look around in fear as the ship shudders again...

SETT

But who is it? Who's trying to
kill us?

5 EXT. SPACE

The freighter *Even Odds* tries to run, its patchwork hull
damaged and burning and smoking. It tries to swerve...

An Ascendant ship JUMPS right into its path and FIRES. A
massive jagged bolt of white electricity bursts from its
pointed silver tip and SLAMS into the *Even Odds*.

CLOSE on the ship's hull as the dissolving effect begins...

6 INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE

Facity reacts to her panels with worry...

FACITY

The outer hull, it's starting to
degenerate... just like Nog and
Shar said it would.

DEZ

Don't talk to me about those
damned Alphies! This is their
damned fault! We wouldn't be under
attack at all if I hadn't let Jake
guilt me into it.

Facity knows it's not the time to argue.

FACITY

The hull's about to give...

7 **EXT. SPACE**

The Ascendant ship FIRES and FIRES on the *Even Odds*, the freighter's skin dissolving more and more...

Thick blue phaser fire comes from off-side, pummelling the Ascendant ship. The Ascendant breaks off attack, looping away. The new attacker gives chase - a JEM'HADAR FIGHTER. *Even Odds* is left ignored for the moment.

8 **INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE**

Amazed, Dez and Facility and the others watch the Jem'Hadar and Ascendant ships exchanging fire on the main viewscreen. Panels and cables still burn and spark around them.

 DEZ
Unbelievable.

 FACILITY
 (w/ wonder)
Why does this keep happening to us?

 DEZ
Don't count your pegs. It's not over yet.

9 **EXT. SPACE**

The Jem'Hadar fighter pursues the Ascendant ship, firing on it constantly. The Ascendant JUMPS away, and the last few shots are lost.

But the Jem'Hadar anticipate the Ascendant's move. Even as the Ascendant JUMPS back into place right behind them, the Jem'Hadar ship does a fast heel-turn, practically spinning itself 180 degrees until it faces the Ascendant again.

The Jem'Hadar take the Ascendant by surprise with a new volley of phaser fire. They're practically at point-blank range, FIRING FIRING FIRING...

BOOM. Almost nose-to-nose, the Ascendant ship EXPLODES. The Jem'Hadar fighter surges through the fire and out the other

side, before swooping back around and steadily approaching the crippled *Even Odds*.

10 **INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE**

Dez and Facity watch the Jem'Hadar ship loom closer and closer, the field of Ascendant debris behind it. They tense - this could be good or bad. Maybe they were just fighting over who gets to kill them.

There's an alert on Facity's panels - she rushes to check.

FACITY
Incoming signal.

With a gulp, Dez nods. Facity presses controls...

And the screen changes to an image of TARAN'ATAR. He stands on the Jem'Hadar bridge wearing one of the viewer-headsets, with VANNIS visible behind him.

TARAN'ATAR (screen)
Captain Dez. Facity.

FACITY
(amazed)
Taran'atar...? What -

TARAN'ATAR (screen)
The *Even Odds* is now under the protection of the Dominion, by direct order of the Founders.

DEZ
Umm, thanks, I guess. But why?

11 **INT. EVEN ODDS - PIF'S QUARTERS**

The conversation is sounding through the entire ship's comm system. Pif and Sett have their ears perked up, curious...

TARAN'ATAR (comm)
Jem'Hadar vessels have been shadowing you for some weeks now. This was the wish of the Founder you call... Meera.

Pif and Sett both BARK loudly, excited and relieved and grateful. Picking up the mood, the puppies start to copy their parents with happy little YELPS and SQUEAKS.

12 **INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE**

The Gaber family's happy barking sounds through the comm. Dez and Facity sag in blissful relief. They share a grin.

DEZ

(w/ feeling)

Taran'atar, thank you. You've saved our lives - again. And please pass on our thanks to Meera if you see her.

TARAN'ATAR (screen)

Do you require assistance? Can you manoeuvre?

FACITY

Not as we are - the main engines are fried.

TARAN'ATAR (screen)

Stand by. We will tractor you to a repair facility.

13 **EXT. SPACE**

The Jem'Hadar ship casts a tractor beam over the *Even Odds*.

CLOSE on the freighter's hull - with its skin half melted away, the tractor beam has an unexpected effect. Sparks and tiny explosions start spreading over its surface...

14 **THE WA**

Prees reacts with alarm as the formless material of the Wa goes haywire again. Electric bolts spark and jump around the room, the coloured patches transform into open MOUTHS and small BIRDS fly out of them, circling around.

PREES

(into comm)

Captain - no! Stop the tractor
beam! The Wa is -

The Wa CONVULSES like a living animal trying to buck off an unwanted rider. Prees is knocked off her feet and one of the electric bolts catches her full-on...

15 **INT. EVEN ODDS - BRIDGE**

The rear wall of bridge consoles bucks and convulses too, sparks and fires spreading right to left - approaching Facity's station. Dez runs to grab her...

DEZ
Facity, move -

But too late. The consoles EXPLODE. Dez and Facity are thrown back in a shower of sparks and flames...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

16 EXT. SISKO'S HOUSE

Spring, turning to summer. Warm breeze, gently wafting trees, green grass and golden stone. Mid-afternoon.

17 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

SISKO sits cross-legged on the bed, with young REBECCA sat opposite him. Sisko is helping her to learn her ABCs. He holds up a card with a Bajoran ideogram on it...

SISKO

Do you remember what this one is called?

REBECCA

...Shem?

SISKO

Nearly. It's a tough one. Try again...

REBECCA

(w/ difficulty)

Slem...

SISKO

That's it! Good girl!

With a sigh Sisko puts down the cards and looks at Rebecca. He gazes into her face with a small frown. Thinking. His formerly happy smile slowly falls, a façade dropping away. His mind drifts. Rebecca wonders what changed...

REBECCA

Daddy?

SISKO

It's coming, Rebecca. I can feel it. I know you don't know what I'm talking about. But whatever it is... it's coming.

He reaches out for Rebecca and pulls her close. Hugs her tight while he can. Kisses her head.

KASIDY (o.s.)
Ben? Ben! Jake and Rena just
arrived! Come and say hello.

Sisko's worry does not ease. His mind can't let it go...

18 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Sisko emerges from the bedroom with Rebecca hugged around his chest. JAKE and KASIDY are sat on the sofa, and laid out in front of them on the coffee table are some large charcoal-on-paper drawings, taken from Rena's art bag.

JAKE
Hey, Dad!

SISKO
Hey, Jake-o...

KASIDY
Ben, come and look at these. Rena
drew them...

Sisko gently lowers Rebecca to the ground - she toddles off towards Mummy. He looks to the kitchen, just as RENA is emerging with a mug of steaming tea in each hand.

RENA
Hi, Mister Sisko...

Sisko gazes at her, his worry increasing...

FLASHBACK - 4x03 "THE VISITOR"

Older Jake introduces his wife to his father...

ADULT JAKE
This is Korena... my wife.

BACK TO SCENE

Sisko blinks away the memory. But the worry stays.

SISKO

Rena...

JAKE

Dad, look. We had the morning off today so we went up to Yyn. It's always nice this time of year, and it's kind of... "our place," now. And Rena had been looking for a new project...

By now Rena has delivered the teas, and Sisko has joined them in looking at the drawings.

RENA

So I started sketching some of the ancient ruins there, the statues and carvings. This is what I came up with.

Sisko begins to slowly sift through the drawings, studying each one in turn. They depict the crumbling buildings, eroded statues and worn shapes, lovingly crafted in shades and lines of charcoal. Sisko stops at one in particular...

RENA

That was my favourite. It's a single tall column, looked as if it might have been a person before it got eroded away. But here, at the top...

(traces it
w/ finger)

...I'm probably imagining it, but it kinda looks like an eye. Just one big eye, gazing out at everyone.

Sisko studies the drawing. He looks up at Rena. She's occupied, chatting MOS with Kasidy and Jake. But Sisko is staring at her. She worries him. He doesn't trust her.

The image of ETANA, still sat in her security cell. Alone, withdrawn, sad. This image is relayed on the screens in...

20 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

RO LAREN sits in her chair, turned to look at the screens. She watches her friend in the cell. She's not angry, not hateful, not upset. Just contemplative.

QUARK (o.s.)

So what are you going to do with her?

ANGLE to reveal that QUARK sits in the other seat, watching Ro watching Etana. He gives her space, doesn't push.

RO

Don't know. Kira hasn't decided.

QUARK

Kira isn't the one she betrayed.

RO

No. But everyone's sticking their oar in because of the "unique" circumstances. Kira, Vaughn, Bashir... Richter of course... they're all having their say.

QUARK

What do you say?

RO

Don't know. I'm not mad at her. Maybe I should be. I usually am in this kind of situation.

(pause to think)

With Taran'atar... I couldn't handle my feelings. I ran away from them with the painkillers. Etana is... kinda the same thing. Yes, she betrayed me... hurt me... but she didn't mean to.

(sad chuckle)

In a way, she helped. Forced me to face up to what I was doing. So, upshot is... I don't know.

Quark nods solemnly. The Promenade door opens, and VAUGHN enters. Ro stands to greet him.

RO
Quark... would you mind?

Quark gets the message - leave us alone. He gets up, but with a comforting smile to Ro.

QUARK
You know where to find me.

And then he's gone. Ro gestures for Vaughn to sit.

RO
Thank you for coming, Commander.
(braces herself)
I asked to see you... to tell you that I'm afraid I won't be able to work with you anymore.

Vaughn translates her words - she's talking about his anti-Section 31 group. The conversation continues on the surface but underneath they both know what they're really saying. Vaughn composes himself, responds calmly and certainly.

VAUGHN
No.

RO
Commander, I think you'd agree that my recent actions... my recent decisions... demonstrate my unsuitability for the task you assigned me.

VAUGHN
Lieutenant, I do not agree. As I told you at the time, we've all made our mistakes, and we all have our issues. It doesn't change our obligations.

Ro sees she's not getting through to him. She tries her best to explain, enunciating every word.

RO

Every step I take... it hurts.
Every thought I think... hurts.

VAUGHN

Lieutenant, I know you like to think you have it worse than everyone else. But I feel I must point out that I have been doing this job for longer than you've been alive. Twice as long, in fact. And I'm still going. Your desire to run away is exactly that - running away. Again. You told me your reasons for taking this assignment. Those reasons still apply. You are entirely capable of completing the task to my satisfaction, and that is an end of it.

(he stands)

Carry on, Lieutenant.

He turns and walks out. Ro considers what he's said...

21 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

BASHIR and TARSES stand together in the Infirmary. Bashir is deferent and conciliatory. Tarses is unhappy, but civil.

BASHIR

I'm really sorry, Simon. I know this must be awkward for you.

TARSES

(lying)

No no, it's fine, Doctor.

BASHIR

I can't really explain why, but to be frank, my resignation was fake. Captain Kira and Commander Vaughn

have offered me back the CMO position... and I would like to take it. Things that happened while I was away made it clear to me that this is what I want to do. Where I feel like I ought to be. But... I don't know where that leaves you.

TARSES

I'll figure something out.

BASHIR

I would like you to stay. Until we know what's going to happen to Etana, we'll be a hand short around here.

(sudden worry)

Not that I'm talking about making you a nurse. Your promotion still stands. Nobody's taking that away from you. But I'd understand if you decided to look for another CMO position elsewhere.

TARSES

I'll figure something out.

BASHIR

Okay. Okay. So... what do we have on for today?

TARSES

Not a lot. I've made Ro promise to come back for regular checks. Dax and Prynne and Quark are all healed. Unless there's any last minute emergencies, that's it.

BASHIR

Good. Looks like you've got everything under control.

TARSES

Yes, I do. Oh, before I forget...

Tarses reaches off and grabs a padd, hands it to Bashir.

TARSES

This came for you while you were away. I guess whoever sent it didn't realise you'd resigned. Or fake resigned, anyway.

Bashir looks at the padd - it features GARAK's face.

CUT TO:

22 FLAMES

Crackling and burning hot. But not chaotic - smooth and flowing against black night. Shapes begin to move across it, bodies blocking our view. **OPEN OUT** to...

23 EXT. ASCENDANT ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

The Ascendant chief priest ESSK (10x12 "Heresy") stands silently praying over the flames in an iron brazier. He is troubled, but trying not to dwell on it too much.

Another figure approaches, joining him in prayer. Essk looks up - it is BLAS, from 10x14 "Against the Odds."

BLAS

Cardinal Essk. Blessings of the True upon you.

ESSK

And on you, Archquester Blas. How go the preparations?

BLAS

They proceed apace, Cardinal. Archquester Raiq continues to inspire the Knights to their sacred duty. More children of the True emerge from the stars to join the Quest every turn.

ESSK

(small mutter)

Raiq... of course...

BLAS

Are you troubled, Cardinal? Do you
fear for the Quest?

Essk has to be very careful how he answers. He can't be
seen to be disloyal. But still...

ESSK

It is not fear, Blas. Only
curiosity. I cannot help but
wonder why Mistress Iliana chose
Raiq to lead this Quest. She is an
honest Knight, dedicated and
devoted to the True. But she is
only a Knight.

BLAS

Raiq leads the crusade against the
hated Eav'oq and Bajorans, yes.
But only that. She plays a purely
martial role. You remain Cardinal.
You still guide the spiritual life
of the Knights.

ESSK

Is there a difference? Does our
doctrine not state clearly that we
fight for the glory of the
Unnameable Ones with our every
thought? That our prayers do
battle among the stars against the
prayers of infidels for the honour
of being heard by Them?

BLAS

That is our custom, Cardinal. To
pray to the True is to fight for
Them, and to fight is to pray.

ESSK

Exactly. And yet now, Mistress
Iliana elevates a simple Knight to
the glory of leading a great
crusade. The crusade that may
finally lead us into the True's

light. And I... who have worked and prayed and fought for three hundred turns to rise to the role of Cardinal, leader of all Ascendants across the stars... I am left to pray alone by the flames, while Raiq trains and inspires... and leads. I find that... curious. Nothing more.

BLAS

(cautious)

She is the Fire, Cardinal. The Knights trust her. We have all been taught to do so since our first breath. You counselled belief in the Fire every day you have been Cardinal. You cannot doubt her now.

ESSK

I never doubt! Never again say such a thing, Blas. Never even suggest it. To even entertain such thoughts is high treason, punishable by the stake.

But that's fear underneath the anger. The truth is, Essk does doubt, and he also knows the potential punishment.

BLAS

(bows head)

I beg forgiveness, Cardinal.

ESSK

I grant it. My concern is for the Knights, Blas. I wonder if perhaps the Mistress Iliana does not... understand the Ascendants as well as she might. To fight is to pray, and to pray is to fight. These have been our ways for thousands of turns. She seeks to change them, at a time when we ought to be holding faster to them than ever. And perhaps that is my

failing. If I had helped her to understand...

(beat)

But I also wonder if perhaps she cannot understand us. She is, after all... not one of us. She has not suffered what we have suffered. She cannot know the real, burning heart of the True's chosen people.

BLAS

She knows the True themselves. She came to us from them. That is a greater truth than any Ascendant can possibly know.

(reassuring)

Do not be troubled, Cardinal. The Knights will follow the Fire, with no doubt in their hearts. This is also our way.

(beat)

Blessings of the True upon you.

With this traditional parting, Essk bows his head, allowing Blas to leave. Essk is left alone over the flaming brazier again. His worry has not abated. If anything it increased. He mutters into the flames...

ESSK

Yes... this is our way.

On Essk's troubled features, the lights of the flickering flames reflecting off his silver skin...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

24 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

A gorgeous sunny day, sunlight streaming in. Rena stands gazing out of the kitchen window at the meadows, the large central tree waving gently. She smiles, comfortable here.

She turns her attention back to the sink in front of her, washing up after the family had an afternoon snack.

SISKO (o.s.)
What are you doing here?

She turns, surprised. Sisko is standing against the wall, arms folded, watching her. Studying her. Inspecting her.

RENA
Just getting these plates and cups washed up. My grandfather always said your guests should feel comfortable in your home, but should never take advantage.

She carries on washing. But Sisko isn't done.

SISKO
I mean what are you doing here, in my house? Who are you?

RENA
I... don't understand.

SISKO
You confuse me, Azeni Korena. I don't like feeling confused.

Rena is a little thrown by this conversation. Sisko is starting to creep her out. But the moment is broken when Jake enters the room, oblivious. Jake goes to Rena, pecks her on the cheek, and grabs a cloth from the sink.

JAKE
Crumbs on the sofa. Sorry.

Jake heads back out again. Sisko lets it go for now - with a last worried glance at Rena, he turns to join Jake in the living room. Mystified, Rena returns to the washing up.

25 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

The office doors open and KIRA strides out, heading down the stairs to the central Ops table. DAX is running the boards as usual, with NOG at engineering, SHAR at sciences, BOWERS at tactical and VAUGHN strolling amiably around.

KIRA
Everything under control?

DAX
Yup.

KIRA
Taran'atar back yet?

DAX
You'd know if he was, Captain.

Kira is nervous, for some reason. Nothing massive, just the kind of drumming the fingers, what-shall-I-do-with-myself uncertainty. Dax smirks at Kira's discomfort.

Then Dax's panels light up with a new ALERT. She checks, nods. Smiles at Kira.

DAX
Neutrino levels rising. Looks like you were just in time.

KIRA
(nods, relaxing)
On screen.

26 **EXT. SPACE - THE WORMHOLE**

The wormhole bursts open in its customary colourful display - Dominion Vessel 288 emerges. It moves slowly, carefully, dragging another ship behind it by tractor - the *Even Odds*. The two ships are arranged awkwardly, so that the tractor beam does not attach to any damaged portion of the hull.

27 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

The crew react to this sight on the screen with some mild surprise. Dax checks readings on her panels...

DAX

It's Vannis's ship alright. But I don't recognise the other one. The transponder ID says it's -

NOG

That's the *Even Odds!*

KIRA

What? Your spy ship?

NOG

Yes, sir! Only it looked a lot better the last time I saw it.

BOWERS

(off panels)

It's had major weapons damage. Engines blown, hull compromised, shields non-existent, defence systems ruined...

(w/ horror)

...Ascendant weapon signatures.

KIRA

Oh, *kosst.*

DAX

Hail from Vannis's ship.

At Kira's nod, Dax puts the call on the screen. Vannis appears, wearing the head-set, with Taran'atar visible behind her, and also OPAKA lingering politely.

VANNIS (screen)

Greetings, Captain. As you can see, we have guests. Their ship is in need of major repairs and there are substantial medical concerns among its crew.

Nog and Shar share a worried look...

KIRA

(into action)

Dax - get them a docking port and tell Bashir and Tarses to get there fast. Bowers, Shar, Nog - I want a full tactical work-up on what happened to them and how to fix it. Vaughn, liaise with Ro and Taran'atar on any security issues.

(back to Vannis)

Thanks for your help, Vannis. See you in a few. Kira out.

The screen goes back to the external view of the Dominion ship and the *Even Odds*.

KIRA

Alright, everyone. Get to it.

NOG

Captain? Permission to put a call through to Bajor... We should tell Jake.

Kira realises he's right. She nods her permission. Nog turns to his panels...

28 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

As Vannis's ship settles onto the docking ring next to the *Defiant*, and work bees gently tractor the damaged *Even Odds* onto the next port along.

29 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

At the first airlock, a full medical team including Bashir, Tarses and RICHTER are in action. They oversee as non-coms guide anti-grav stretchers out of the ship and into the corridor. The stretchers carry unconscious *Even Odds* crew - Dez, Facity, GLESSIN and others. Brad follows them into the corridor, sniffing away tears.

The medical team moves off down the corridor. Once they clear, a team of Shar and T'RB, Bowers and ALECO, and engineers LEISHMAN and CANDLEWOOD board the freighter.

At the next airlock along, Vaughn and Ro wait for the door to roll open. Vannis, Taran'atar and Opaka step out into the corridor, escorted by two Jem'Hadar soldiers.

VAUGHN

Ambassador, welcome back.

TARAN'ATAR

Thank you, Commander. I should report to the Captain.

VAUGHN

I'll tell her you're coming.

Taran'atar nods simply, and heads off. Vannis slips in alongside him, supporting him without a word. Ro exchanges a glance with Vaughn - "wish me luck" - and follows them. Vaughn turns to Opaka, and warmly takes her hands.

VAUGHN

Sulan - what a pleasant surprise. I had no idea you were coming.

OPAKA

It's wonderful to see you again too, Elias. But I cannot stay. Vedek Yevir has asked to see me.

VAUGHN

Yevir? What does he want?

OPAKA

He wasn't prepared to say over subspace. But he did say it was a matter of vital importance.

VAUGHN

Isn't everything a matter of vital importance to him?

(chuckle)

I'll arrange a ship for you.

They smile, glad to be in each other's company. But Opaka is too spiritual and Vaughn is too professional to take it any further. He leads her down the corridor...

30 THE WA

The formless space in the belly of the *Even Odds* looks dead, or at least inactive. The white is a lifeless dull grey, the coloured splotches seeming to droop listlessly.

A hole opens in the middle, revealing the turbolift and PRYNN inside it. She steps out, and the hole disappears behind her. She spots Shar scanning with his tricorder.

PRYNN

Shar? T'rb said you were down here. I heard what happened...

SHAR

Prynn, hello. The situation is definitely not good - the Wa seems to be inactive.

PRYNN

Is it dead?

SHAR

I don't believe so. Its energy levels are very low, but it is already showing limited signs of repairing itself.

PRYNN

This is our fault, isn't it? The Ascendants attacked them because of us.

SHAR

We do not know that for certain. But it does seem likely. I found the translation equipment I gave to Prees - they were listening to the Ascendant comm channels just before they were attacked.

PRYNN

And the Ascendants realised we
were ear-wigging. Where's Nog?

SHAR

Trying to contact Jake and Rena.

31 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira stands behind her desk, all business.

KIRA

Did you get in touch with him?

ANGLE to reveal Taran'atar and Vannis opposite her...

TARAN'ATAR

Not directly, Captain. Even with
the return of a third Founder, the
Link remains overwhelmed. I was
unable to speak with Odo in
person, only to leave a message
with the Vorta Weyoun.

KIRA

You have to keep trying. I didn't
go through all this to be foiled
by a Dominion answering service.

VANNIS

We had every intention, Captain.
Then we received the distress call
from the freighter ship.
Protection of that vessel was also
the Founder's wish. The Ambassador
assured me that it would also be
your wish.

KIRA

Okay. Yes, you're right. Thank
you. It's just that it's one thing
to agree to the alliance in
principle. We need to make it
happen in practice as well.

TARAN'ATAR

Perhaps if you were to return to the Link with us. Your presence might... catch Odo's attention.

Kira takes that on board... he might be right.

SHAR (comm)
ch'Thane to Captain Kira.

KIRA
Go ahead, Shar.

SHAR (comm)
Could you come to the *Even Odds* please, Captain? There's something I think you ought to see.

She frowns - that's a bit worrying.

KIRA
I'll be right there. Kira out.
(back to T and V)
Thank you, Ambassador, Vannis. If you'll excuse me.

Taran'atar and Vannis nod their acceptance, and all three head out to Ops.

32 INT. SISKO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Kasidy sits on the couch with Rebecca. Sisko is trying not to pace the room. She's seen him agitated like this before - it's fine, it'll pass. They're both waiting for word...

The door from the office opens and Jake and Rena emerge.

KASIDY
What did Nog say?

JAKE
It's the *Even Odds*. My friends from the Gamma Quadrant. They were attacked. They're at the station now.

KASIDY

Who attacked them?

RENA

The Ascendants.

Sisko's head snaps up in alarm at that...

JAKE

I should go. I should be there.

RENA

I'll come with you.

SISKO

(quiet, menacing)

You're not going anywhere.

The others all look at Sisko, confused and wary. There's a bit of a stand-off as a result of the strange statement. Jake tries to keep the peace...

JAKE

Dad, what are you talking about?

SISKO

I'm talking about your "wife." I want to know who she is and what she's doing here.

RENA

Mister Sisko, I'm not sure -

SISKO

You. You married my son in an alternate future timeline that nobody but me even remembers. And then you turn up here. You marry my son all over again. But where did you come from? I get back from the wormhole, and there you are, all of a sudden. And in a matter of weeks you've got Jake tied around your finger and you've wormed your way into my home. I want to know why.

KASIDY

(amazed)

Ben, what has gotten into you?

JAKE

Come on, Rena. We're leaving.

Jake is firm, annoyed at his dad. Rena is a little scared. Kasidy is just confused. As Jake begins to lead Rena to the door, Sisko steps forward, blocking their way.

SISKO

I said you're not going anywhere.
Not until I get some answers.

JAKE

Dad -

Determined, Sisko grabs for Rena, holding both her arms so she can't move. She flinches back, scared of him. He hisses his question at her, obsessed with this.

SISKO

Who are you? Why are you here?
What do you want with us?

KASIDY

Ben, let go of her!

SISKO

No! It's all coming, it's all
starting right now, and she's a
part of it! I need to know!

Jake steps between them, physically pushing his father back, forcing him to let go. But Sisko isn't giving up that easy. He looms forward, threateningly...

SISKO

Step out of my way, Jake.
(re Rena)
This thing -

But Sisko doesn't get to finish the sentence, because Jake PUNCHES him in the face. Rena and Kasidy YELP with shock.

Sisko staggers back, stunned that his son would hit him. Jake is furious, seething. We've never seen him angrier.

JAKE

Never talk about my wife like that. Never. Do you hear me?

Sisko seems to have finally realised what he was doing. The punch has woken him up. He sputters, trying to apologise...

SISKO

Jake, I... Rena...

JAKE

Don't even bother. Come on, Rena. We're leaving, now.

Jake grabs Rena's hand and leads the poor confused girl out of the front door of the house. They're gone. Sisko stands there, trying to understand what just happened. He looks over to Kasidy for comfort, understanding...

But Kasidy is clinging tightly to baby Rebecca, and looking at him with horror. When he takes a step closer to her, she actually flinches back, pulls the baby away from him.

KASIDY

Benjamin Lafayette Sisko, get out of this house. And you had better get your damned head on straight before you ever come back into it.

Sisko is stunned at what has happened here. He got carried away, and he's being punished for it. And he knows they're right to do it. That he could do anything to make his own wife and child afraid of him...

Without a word, he walks to the back door and out of the house. Down the steps, into the fields, and gone.

Left alone now, Kasidy slumps to the sofa, holding Rebecca tight, and begins to softly cry.

Shar and Prynn are waiting outside the airlock that leads to the *Even Odds*. Kira walks up to them...

KIRA

Shar? Prynn? What's going on?

Shar holds up the padd in his hand.

SHAR

I was able to retrieve some of the comm chatter from the *Even Odds'* recording of the Wa.

KIRA

Okay. What does it say?

SHAR

Captain, you should understand that this came in after the attack. After Taran'atar saved them and brought them here.

KIRA

Shar, what does it say?

SHAR

(deep breath)

It says, "Nerys, press black."

A personal message, direct to her. Kira's face falls as she absorbs the shock...

34 THE WA

Kira stands alone in the Wa. It looks a little healthier now, healing itself. She's staring daunted at one of the coloured smudges - this one is a solid black.

What will she find on the other side? Only one way to know. She reaches out, her fingers swim into the colour...

The environment changes subtly. The wall in front of her seems to solidify and clarify, becoming like a mirror. And standing opposite Kira, her mirror image, is ILIANA. Her Cardassian double smiles warmly to see her.

ILIANA
Hello, Nerys.

On Kira's reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

35 EXT. ASCENDANT ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT of the Ascendant encampment in the black ossified natural amphitheatre formation under a permanent night sky. The impromptu town of tents and pavilions has grown as more Ascendants come to join the crusade. It now fills the entire bowl shape to the brim, even overflows at points.

There are bunks for sleeping, canteens for food, workshops for armour and weaponry. The Knights themselves train or pray in groups wherever they find space. Iron braziers glowing with flames serve for both lighting and prayer.

Around the very edge of the black bowl, we see the shining silver darts of their ships - thousands of them packed in tightly. And in the very centre, grander and more secure than any other, is Iliana's pavilion.

CLOSE on Cardinal Essk, as he dashes between the various structures and milling Ascendants. He is worried, urgent. He dodges past flames and practice-dueling Knights, frantic to get where he's going. That being...

...an Ascendant ship, on the outskirts of the encampment. Its canopy is open and Iliana sits in the pilot's seat. RAIQ stands by her side, guiding and teaching Iliana how to use the controls. Essk runs up to them, tries his best to compose himself. He shouts up to the two women.

ESSK

Mistress! I heard rumours that you were training to fly our vessels. Are you leaving us?

ILIANA

(dismissive)

Of course not, Cardinal. I just thought I would like to get out there and see the stars. Look at them! Aren't they beautiful?

She smiles up at the night sky. Essk sputters to respond...

ESSK

Of course, Mistress. But they are also fraught with dangers. Do you not wish an escort?

ILIANA

(chuckle)

You have no idea of the things I've faced in my time, Essk. Of the things I've done. I'm quite sure I can take care of myself.

ESSK

Nevertheless, Mistress, I must protest. The Final Ascension approaches, by your own words. You should be here, with us.

ILIANA

(cold, sharp)

Have some dignity, Cardinal. I will do whatever I please, and the supposed High Priest of the Ascendants will not whine in my ear like a baby about it. Now get out of my way.

Shocked and insulted but covering it, Essk bows and backs away a few steps. Iliana nods to Raiq beside her...

ILIANA

Thank you, Raiq. I'm sure this will be fine.

Raiq also bows her head and manoeuvres down the side of the vessel to the ground. Iliana works the controls, the canopy closes, and the ship rises smoothly off the ground. There's no whoosh of engines or visible exhaust - it just lifts as if by magic, turns gracefully and zooms off into the dark.

Raiq begins to turn away, but Essk calls after her angrily.

ESSK

Archquester Raiq. I am your
Cardinal and you will show me the
respect I am due.

Raiq turns languidly back to Essk. She bows her head, acts
deferent and proper on the surface. But the snide attitude
underneath it is unmistakable.

RAIQ
I beg forgiveness, Cardinal.

Essk does not grant it.

ESSK
Explain to me, Archquester, why
Mistress Iliana has taken you - a
mere Knight - to her bosom, as if
you deserve the honour, while I am
belittled and abandoned.

RAIQ
I would not presume to speak the
Mistress's mind, Cardinal. I only
know she came to us from the True,
and it is our duty to follow her.

ESSK
I lead the Ascendants, Raiq. Not
her. And not you. Remember that.

RAIQ
(innocent)
She is the Fire... is she not?

A challenge to his authority. Essk tenses, incensed.

ESSK
You are dismissed, child.

Raiq bows her head and backs away. Essk is left fuming.

36 **EXT. SPACE**

Iliana's borrowed ship gracefully slips through open space.
Even at such high warp it seems practically effortless.

After a few moments, the ship drops out of warp and glides to a halt. There is nothing else around, no other ships or planets. Just the tiny silver dart on its own.

37 **INT. ASCENDANT VESSEL**

No larger than a standard shuttlecraft, with barely room for two occupants, one behind the other. The panels inside are seamless silver, like the outside. Iliana waves a hand over one area, an amorphous black smudge on the shiny surface - a smaller version of what we've seen in the Wa.

The vessel reacts with a ripple effect across its internal surfaces. The piloting panels become less pronounced, less important. The rear bulkhead slowly grows in brightness, the white light of the Wa shining through. But the mirror surface is as yet uncertain, undefined. And unoccupied.

Iliana waits in her seat, gazing out of the window at the stars. She's content, unhurried. After a while, the rear bulkhead ripples again, the light becoming brighter, the mirror becoming clearer. A message is coming through.

Iliana stands. She dives her fingers into the black smudge on the panel, and the mirror completes its transformation. There on its other side, is Kira. Iliana smiles warmly.

ILIANA

Hello, Nerys.

Kira's face falls as she realises who she's dealing with.

KIRA

Iliana... where are you?

INTERCUT WITH:

38 **THE WA**

Kira stands in the Wa, talking to Iliana across the mirror.

ILIANA

I'm in an Ascendant ship...

(shrug)

...somewhere. I have to hand you this one, Nerys. Finding an old

abandoned ship, disguised as a freighter... using it to listen in on us? Very clever. Kudos, I believe is the human word.

KIRA

I'll make sure to pass on your appreciation. If any of them are still alive, that is.

ILIANA

(cheerful)

Oh, that wasn't me. The Knights tracked down an echo in the... something. I don't really know, I wasn't paying attention. I only heard about the attack after the fact. Guess it was lucky your new Dominion friends came along when they did.

KIRA

(cagey)

What are you talking about?

ILIANA

Seriously, Nerys. You think I don't know all about it? But it doesn't bother me. Make your alliances, it doesn't change anything. Besides, I'm thrilled the freighter survived. I was worried I wouldn't have chance to talk to you before the end.

KIRA

You seem awfully confident this is going to be the end.

ILIANA

Well of course I am. My mission was ordained by the Prophets, don't you remember? You were there. You heard them say it yourself. "I am the Fire."

KIRA

And I'm supposed to believe that means you're destined to win?

Iliana's cheerful demeanour shifts to cold and taunting.

ILIANA

I will complete my mission, Nerys. There's simply nothing you can do about that.

KIRA

Yes, there is. I'll stop you.

ILIANA

How? No, really - how?

KIRA

I'm the Hand of the Prophets.

Iliana breaks into raucous laughter. It worries Kira.

ILIANA

Don't you know what that means? You don't, do you? Well, I hope you haven't been placing all your hopes on that, Nerys. Sisko told the Prophets that you were his "right hand." That's all. That's why they call you that.

FLASHBACK - 9x20 "SLAVE"

Kira has just woken up in the Infirmary, after her heart replacement. Sisko sits by her bed, holding her hand.

SISKO

What good would I be without my right hand?

The phrase reminds Kira of what the Prophets called her...

BACK TO SCENE

Kira tries to remain defiant. But what Iliana is saying has shaken her - she did believe it was something special.

KIRA

It doesn't matter why They call me
Their Hand. It means They have a
role for me to play.

ILIANA

Oh, they do. It's called "blunt
instrument." You're not my equal,
Nerys. You're literally half of
what I am. Sisko - he's my equal.
He's the Emissary... I'm the
Emissary. You... you're just his
assistant.

Kira is being shaken, much as she might not want to be...

39 EXT. BAJOR - FIELDS

Moving towards dusk now, but still warm, a pleasant summer
evening. Fields of corn and vegetables, farms and pastures.

Sisko treads along a winding country road between these
fields. He looks out at the scenery, utterly untouched by
it. A motorised truck rumbles past him along the road, the
back filled with happy, raucous Bajoran teenagers drinking
and partying. Sisko watches them go. Their happiness means
nothing to him. He has been cast out. He keeps walking.

40 EXT. SPACE

A small Bajoran personal shuttle zooms up into orbit,
leaving the glittering green seas of Bajor behind.

41 INT. BAJORAN SHUTTLE - COCKPIT

Like the ones Jake and Taran'atar both flew into the Gamma
Quadrant. Jake sits in the pilot seat, Rena beside him.
Jake is clearly still angry with his father.

JAKE

I get it, he's the Emissary. He
gets visions, or whatever. I've
grown up with it for the last ten
years, I know he gets carried away
sometimes. But this is too far.

He turns to Rena, expecting her to agree. But she's quiet, thoughtful.

JAKE

Why aren't you angrier?

RENA

Because I know he must have had a reason. He's the Emissary.

JAKE

He grabbed you. He hurt you. He called you a thing.

RENA

Jake, there's something you have to understand about Bajorans. From the first story our parents read to us as a little baby, we learn about the Emissary. He's part of our culture, our shared consciousness as a people. We trust him, because we know he is our direct link to the Prophets.

JAKE

I know all of that.

RENA

No, I don't think you do. At least not like I know it. Jake, my generation is the first for who the Emissary is more than just a story. He's real. He walks among us, and he has done for almost my whole life. I can see him and hear him, even touch him. Do you have any idea what that's like for us... for me?

Rena makes good points, forcing Jake to think about them.

RENA

So I forgive him. And I would think that being your father would

entitle him to the same
understanding from you.

JAKE

It doesn't. It makes it worse.

Jake drives the shuttle onwards...

42 EXT. SPACE

Jake's shuttle continues on its way. In the far distance,
slowly growing closer, is the distinctive shape of DS9.

A slight shift sideways in space, and now we see another
ship coming towards us, away from the station - a Starfleet
runabout. It crosses paths at a safe distance from Jake's
shuttle and we turn, to watch it zoom towards the planet.

43 EXT. BAJOR - MONASTERY

Establishing the large monastery in Bajor's capital...

44 INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY GARDEN - EVENING

The internal garden area where we have seen vedeks and kais
meet before. Vedek YEVIR and Kai SOLIS are already there,
strolling gently around the paths, inspecting the plantings
and sculptures. They turn together at the sound...

...of Opaka entering the garden. She bows her head at the
high company - Yevir and Solis both do likewise to her.

OPAKA

Vedek... Your Eminence.

SOLIS

Please, Sulan, do not bow your
head to me. You are far more
eminent than I will ever be.

YEVIR

(warmly)

Eminences, then. Thank you both
for agreeing to meet with me. I
hope it was no trouble?

OPAKA

(smirk to self)

Once Commander Vaughn heard how important it was, he insisted on assigning a pilot and one of their runabouts to bring me.

YEVIR

Kai Solis, do you have the book?

SOLIS

The original book of Ohalu, yes.

Solis holds up an ancient bound tome - the book of Ohalu. Yevir brings two more items out from his robes.

YEVIR

Thank you. I have brought two equally important artefacts... the jevonite figurine, found at B'Hala, as the book was. And this - a letter from Elim Garak.

OPAKA

Vedek... what is this about?

YEVIR

We three have worshipped the Prophets all our lives. Yet in recent years, we have all three walked different paths. You, Opaka Sulan, have lived among the Eav'oq. Solis follows the path of Ohalu. And I... I went to Cardassia and learned the Oralian Way. I asked you here today to explain what I have finally come to understand.

SOLIS

Which is?

YEVIR

That they are all the same.

Ending on Yevir's beatific smile...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

45 EXT. BAJOR SURFACE - B'HALA

Establishing the archaeological dig at the ancient city...

46 INT. B'HALA CAVES

The warrens and excavated spaces of the buried city. It's been more than five years since the city was uncovered, and more and more has been revealed, Bajoran iconography and ancient statues. Artificial lights are strung up, and monks and prylars work painstakingly by them to reveal yet more.

Prylar EIVOS (last seen 8x06 "Fallout") steps along one of the opened passages towards us, calling out.

EIVOS

Emissary! This is a wonderful
surprise! Welcome to B'Hala.

The workers look up in muted awe. They know he doesn't like to be gawked at, but still - this is the Emissary.

Sisko plods slowly along, gazing absently at the excavated walls. Eivos can instantly see that Sisko is troubled, but chooses not to draw attention to it.

SISKO

Hello, Prylar Eivos.

EIVOS

You must call me Calan, Emissary.
I had no idea you were coming.

SISKO

No... I was just walking. I've
been walking for hours. And I
seemed to just... end up here.

EIVOS

We're all honoured to receive you,
Emissary, of course. How can we
help?

SISKO

I'm so tired... and confused. I could use a quiet place to rest. And there was clarity here, once before...

EIVOS

Then I know exactly the place. The *bantaca* chamber is empty. I'll find a bed roll and I'll make sure you're not disturbed.

Sisko just nods, relieved and grateful that somebody is willing to take care of him and not ask questions. He follows Eivos back down the passage...

47 THE WA

As Kira talks to Iliana in the Wa...

KIRA

Why did you bring me here? Why go to all the trouble of making a call halfway across the galaxy? What do you want?

INTERCUT WITH:

48 INT. ASCENDANT VESSEL

As Iliana talks to Kira in the cockpit of her ship...

KIRA (cont)

The Ascendants can't be very happy about you chatting with the enemy.

ILIANA

Oh, don't worry yourself about that, Nerys. They're easily distracted. I called because I wanted to offer some advice.

KIRA

Advice. From a madwoman like you.

ILIANA

Take revelation wherever you can get it, Nerys. Now listen. Don't try to stop us from reaching the wormhole. Trust me. You'll only make it harder on yourself.

As Kira reacts stoically to that...

49 INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY GARDEN - EVENING

Opaka and Solis are now sat on one of the stone benches in the garden, as the sky turns towards night. Yevir stands in front of them, passionate and excited about his subject.

OPAKA

Linjarin, please. I do believe that the religions of all worlds contain their own fragment of a much larger truth. But to claim that such disparate faiths are in fact the same faith...

YEVIR

I know. I had trouble grasping it myself at first. But the evidence is undeniable. Here -
(re Garak's padd)
- in this letter, Mister Garak describes a spiritual awakening he recently experienced. You may have heard of the Vinculum, an aspect of the Oralian Way they described as a nexus, another plane of existence that cuts through past, present and future, where everything is connected. I have come to believe that what they are actually describing... is our own Celestial Temple.

Opaka and Solis sit quietly. How to be polite here...?

SOLIS

That seems a remarkable jump of deduction, Vedek.

YEVIR

I was there, when Garak first recovered the records of the Vinculum from the Oralian ruins at Gardat. I said then that it bore similarities to the faiths of other worlds. But I didn't realise at the time how similar... Garak describes encountering the images of friends and family, be they alive or dead. And that those images conveyed messages of wisdom and peace. We have all encountered the Orbs of the Prophets - does that not sound like our own Orb Experiences?

OPAKA

Perhaps...

YEVIR

Garak also describes the image of Oralius itself. He calls the figure...

(reads from padd)

A shape of pure white, but soft, tall and thin, with one warm and smiling eye at its top, and many pinkish ribbons for limbs, which it used to embrace the Hebitians.

On Opaka as she remembers...

FLASHBACK - 8x23 "RISING SON"

Meeting Itu the Eav'oq for the first time. The tall, white alien embraces Opaka close with his thin ribbon limbs...

BACK TO SCENE

Opaka is dumbstruck as she realises what Yevir is saying...

OPAKA

Oralius... was an Eav'oq?

As Opaka tries to absorb this...

50 **THE WA**

Where Kira continues her conversation with Iliana...

KIRA

You can't seriously expect me to give up. We're going to fight you, and we're going to win.

ILIANA

Of course I don't really expect that. I know you better than any being in existence, Nerys, because I am you. But it was worth a shot. I don't actually want to see you die.

KIRA

Considering you were prepared to tear apart the whole of creation to get me less than a year ago, I have my doubts about that.

ILIANA

That was the old me. Since we last met, I've become... whole. Just like I told you I would. I understand now. I'm Bajoran, I'm Cardassian, I'm Ascendant... and it all fits together. Everything is connected, Nerys. Even you.

Kira shakes her head, refusing to believe. Iliana smiles.

ILIANA

You don't see it, do you? The patterns. The connections.

KIRA

I know the Ascendants worship the Prophets... or at least their version of the Prophets. Just like the Eav'oq do. And like I do.

ILIANA
You're missing one.

51 **INT. B'HALA CAVES**

The excavated cave that contains B'Hala's grand *bantaca* spire, just as Sisko discovered it in 5x10 "Rapture." Now he lies at the base of it, curled up on a bedroll, alone. He's asleep, but fitfully, head full of troubling dreams.

KIRA (v.o.)
It is the Sisko.

ON SISKO

As he now stands beside the spire, looking down at his own unconscious sleeping body. The image has become hazy and dreamlike - we're in a PROPHECT VISION.

Sisko looks to the voice that spoke - PROPHECT KIRA, stood likewise looking down at Sisko's sleeping form.

PROPHECT KIRA
The Sisko is troubled. Does the game go badly?

SISKO
The game? You mean the plan. The plan to stop the Ascendants.

PROPHECT KIRA
The game does not end. The game continues until all players are out. The Sisko taught us this.

To emphasise her point, Kira lifts a BASEBALL in her hand, and lobs it to Sisko. He catches it instinctively, and...

CUT TO:

52 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE**

Sisko catches the ball just as he did in 8x26 "Unity pt 3." Prophet Kira stands behind her desk, having just thrown the ball. All the crew of Ops silently observe their exchange.

SISKO
(realising)
This is when I returned from the
wormhole.

PROPHET KIRA
When the Sisko returned to the
linear. The Sisko knew the game.

SISKO
Yes. When I was with you, I felt
like I understood. I knew what
needed to be done. But it fades...
with time.

As Sisko struggles to remember what he needs to...

53 **INT. ASCENDANT VESSEL**

As Iliana listens to Kira...

KIRA
I'm not missing anything. The
Prophets reached out to three
races. The Bajorans, the Eav'oq
and the Ascendants. It's all
three, like there were three of us
in the wormhole.

ILIANA
Why would it be three, Nerys? Why
would there be two races on the
Gamma Quadrant side, but only one
on the Alpha side?

As Kira tries to figure this out...

54 **INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY GARDEN - NIGHT**

Full night now, as Yevir, Opaka and Solis hash it out.

YEVIR
Yes. Oralius... was an Eav'oq.

SOLIS
But how is that possible?

YEVIR

The same way that the writer of
that book you're holding tight was
also an Eav'oq.

SOLIS

What?!

OPAKA

(thunderstruck)
By the Prophets... Alu.

Opaka remembers...

FLASHBACK - 10x11 "HARMONY"

Itu is relating the tale of their escape from the previous
Ascendant crusade to Opaka...

ITU

Many sacrificed themselves to
bring it to pass. My brother Alu
was among the lost.

BACK TO SCENE

Opaka works to absorb all of this again...

OPAKA

Itu, my friend and guide among the
Eav'oq. He told me that they used
their Orbs - he called them the
Eyes of Light - to hide themselves
away from the Ascendants. His
brother Alu was in charge of the
effort, and was lost afterwards. I
simply assumed he'd been killed...

YEVIR

But perhaps instead of being
killed, he was transported.

SOLIS

To the Temple?

OPAKA

We know the Orbs do have that capacity when all of them are working together. That is how the Emissary returned to us.

55 **THE WA**

Kira is trying to understand what Iliana is telling her...

KIRA

You're saying there's another Prophet race out there? On our side of the wormhole?

ILIANA

Why not? Look at us, Nerys. You and me. We're reflections of one another. If there's a race right on the Temple's doorstep on each side, why wouldn't there be a race a little further away on each side too? Like... ten light years further away, for example.

The truth finally begins to dawn on Kira...

56 **INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY GARDEN - NIGHT**

Yevir, Opaka and Solis figure it out between them...

YEVIR

Alu went to the Temple... and from there to Bajor.

SOLIS

Where he became known as Ohalu. And his strange interpretation of the Prophets was written down by the Bajorans of the time...

OPAKA

And they created the Ohalavar religion around him.

YEVIR

Yes. After a while, I imagine he tried to return to his own people. Perhaps he got caught in the Denorios Belt by accident, and whisked away in its tachyon eddies, just like the Emissary. And he ended up on...

57 **THE WA**

Kira finishes the thought...

KIRA

...Cardassia. By the Prophets.
It's not three... it's four.

ILIANA

Bajor and the Eav'oq... both loving and peaceful. Cardassia and the Ascendants...

KIRA

...Both going to war.

58 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE**

Back in Sisko's Prophet vision. Sisko looks out of the office window to the stars outside. His reflection in the glass wavers... and becomes an image of Iliana. The Prophet Kira walks up behind Sisko...

PROPHET KIRA

She is the Fire.

SISKO

(ominous)

And the Fire will burn.

(back to Kira)

But what about you? I mean, what about Kira?

PROPHET KIRA

She is the Hand. The Sisko taught us this.

As if to demonstrate, Prophet Kira holds out her hand... and another hand takes it. Silver and shiny, an Ascendant hand. Kira looks up, and she's holding the hand of Raiq.

The two women turn to look at Sisko, who's watching them both, trying to grasp the imagery here.

Raiq holds out her other hand, and into it slips another shape - the not-quite-a-hand of an Eav'oq pink ribbon limb. ITU's single eye smiles warmly.

59 INT. ASHALLA MONASTERY GARDEN - NIGHT

Opaka, Solis and Yevir...

SOLIS
(re Opaka)
Alu...
(re self)
Ohalu...
(re Yevir)
...and Oralius.

YEVIR
Exactly. The Hebitians called their gods the Fates. Oralius brought understanding of the Fates to the Hebitians.

OPAKA
He was their Emissary.

YEVIR
Mister Garak also says that Oralius left Cardassia when the climate changed...

SOLIS
(figuring it out)
He returned to Bajor, bringing the jevonite figurine as a symbol of unity... and was buried at B'Hala.

YEVIR
Yes. As for Garak himself, he said that the figures he saw in the

Vinculum anointed him as the Hand
of the Fates.

60 **BLACK SPACE**

Sisko's Prophet vision has now darkened. He watches the three figures in front of him - Kira, Raiq and Itu, all holding hands. Itu holds out another pink limb...

...And a grey scaly hand takes it. GARAK. The Cardassian man smiles warmly, like the others, and takes Kira's spare hand. Sisko watches, understanding coming to him...

61 **INT. ASCENDANT VESSEL**

Iliana explaining to Kira...

ILIANA

So you see, Nerys... this is going to happen. The symmetry is perfect. Cardassia raped and destroyed Bajor, and now the Ascendants will destroy the Eav'oq. And if you get in our way, we'll destroy you too. It's the will of the Prophets.

62 **THE WA**

Where Kira stands opposite Iliana...

KIRA

You really believe that.

ILIANA

Of course.

KIRA

And are you really so arrogant that you think your beliefs are the only ones that are right?

Iliana gives one last infuriating confident smile.

ILIANA

They're your beliefs, Nerys. I got
them from you.

With that, Iliana's image whisks away. The mirror shimmers
and thickens, returning to the usual white formlessness.
Kira is left standing alone. Iliana is right. As much as
she wishes she didn't believe it, she does. The Ascendants
are going to win.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

63 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE

Establishing the station, with the *Defiant*, the Dominion ship and the *Even Odds* all in a row around the docking ring. We focus on the *Even Odds*, crawling with work bees and repair crews...

64 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Vaughn waits by the airlock, heavy-hearted. Other officers come and go from the ship, busy working on repairs and analyses. After a moment, Kira emerges slowly into the corridor. She's a long way away, mind full of worries.

VAUGHN

Captain? Are you alright?

KIRA

Uhh... yeah. I, uhh... I need to speak to Benjamin.

VAUGHN

I thought you might. But it's easier said than done...

KIRA

Why? What happened?

65 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

Quark carries a tray of drinks out to a group of customers sat at an outside table. That done, he turns and JUMPS...

QUARK

Aah!

...Because the Aarruri family are approaching. Pif leads the way, striding on confidently with his six tiny puppies following behind, and Sett bringing up the rear.

They gaze around, astonished, seeing the massive, bustling, sprawling array of the Promenade for the first time.

PIF
Come on, kids. We're on the other
side of the galaxy! Let's explore!

And they carry on their way, the nervous puppies making
sure to stay safely between their parents. All around, the
people watch in mild surprise, quickly turning to awws.

Quark however cowers back, holding up the tray to protect
himself. Nog wanders up, amused at his uncle's response.

QUARK
What are... they?

NOG
They're called Aarruri, Uncle.
They're from the Gamma Quadrant.

They smile tensely but politely as the dog-aliens pass on
their way to the windows. Quark mutters under his breath...

QUARK
Furry things creep me out.

NOG
(rictus grin)
I know. Just smile.

66 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

A sudden YELL - the Cardassian medic Glessin has jerked
awake and is terrified, confused, looking around himself.

GLESSIN
What - ? Where am I?

Bashir rushes to his side, tries to calm him.

BASHIR
It's alright, you're safe. My
name's Julian, I'm helping you and
your crew mates.

GLESSIN
You're... human?

BASHIR
That's right.

GLESSIN
But this room - it's Cardassian.

BASHIR
Yes, this is Deep Space Nine.
You're in the Alpha Quadrant.

GLESSIN
This is Terok Nor?

And how does he feel about that? He doesn't know. Then the door opens and Glessin GASPS again. Bashir turns to see why - Taran'atar has entered, with Jake and Rena behind him.

BASHIR
Ambassador...

TARAN'ATAR
Doctor. Are they recovered?

BASHIR
Not yet. But they will be.

Rena steps closer to Glessin, who is a bit uncomfortable because of the Jem'Hadar. But Rena's soothing manner helps. Meanwhile, Jake has approached another bio-bed, carrying the injured but conscious Dez.

JAKE
Dez... it's good to see you.

DEZ
That's funny, cause I wish I'd
never seen you in my life.

JAKE
Dez, I -

DEZ
Save it. I just hope you made your
precious father proud.

It's starting to dawn on him. The Vaughn Prophet gazes at him, as Sisko's memory starts to force itself forwards...

71 **MONTAGE FROM PREVIOUS EPS**

Flashes of memory, quick moments that come and go, building in speed and intensity...

- Adult Jake introduces time-displaced Sisko to his future wife (4x03 "The Visitor")
- Three comet fragments approach the Gamma end of the wormhole (3x15 "Destiny")
- In engineering, Sisko is caught in a warp core discharge and phases out of existence (4x03 "The Visitor")
- The four "Hands" standing in a circle (from earlier)
- Sisko stands in the white space of the Temple, as older Jake is unable to rescue him (4x03 "The Visitor")
- Raiq looks curiously into Kira's face, on the bridge of the *Defiant* (10x12 "Heresy")
- Rena's drawing of the figures at Yyn (from earlier)
- Vaughn punches Sisko in the face, by the old tree behind his house (9x24 "Ha'mara")
- Sisko standing in the circle of numerous other alternate Siskos (9x21 "Fearful Symmetry")
- In the open mouth of the wormhole, the *Defiant* bucks as it's rocked by a distortion wave (4x03 "The Visitor")
- Sisko curled up at the base of the *bantaca*, crying in the arms of Prylar Eivos (from later)
- In engineering, Sisko is caught in a warp core discharge and phases out of existence (repeated)

72 **INT. B'HALA CAVES**

Prylar Eivos dashes urgently into the *bantaca* chamber, coming to see what the noise is. It's Sisko, awake now and wailing in anguish, a desperate crying, his heart broken.

EIVOS
Emissary... what's wrong...

Sisko can't answer. Eivos crouches by him and holds him. Sisko collapses into Eivos's arms, weeps against his chest.

EIVOS

Emissary, whatever it is, it will be alright. The Prophets will take care of us.

Sisko still can't answer. But the sobs are slowly coming under control. Eivos doesn't want to pry, only to comfort.

EIVOS
Did you find what you sought?

SISKO
Yes.
(beat)
And I wish I hadn't.

As Sisko snuffles into Eivos's robes...

73 EXT. ASCENDANT ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Cardinal Essk stands on a small dais at the bottom of the Ascendant encampment, surrounded by ceremonial flames.

ESSK
I wish I did not need to say these things, my brothers and sisters. I wish... I did not know the things I know.

Now we see that Essk is orating for the entire Ascendant crowd that fills the arena. They're curious, a little confused, but listening. Essk is giving it all the power of his position, proclaiming with strength and dignity.

ESSK
I know it will be hard for you to hear. But I believe... that Mistress Iliana has lied to us.

Confused and slightly alarmed mutters around the crowd. Can the Cardinal possibly be serious?

The edge of the encampment. As Essk continues his speech in the background, Iliana strides up from the shuttle park.

ESSK (o.s.)

She has tried to usurp your love
and faith from its due course -
the doctrine that has sustained
the children of the True in our
great Quest for millennia!

Raiq is waiting for Iliana. The Knight nods towards the
centre of the encampment, where Essk holds court.

Down in the centre of the amphitheatre, Essk passionately
preaches to his worried flock.

ESSK

It pains me to say it, but I do
not trust that she has the
interests of the Ascendants at her
core.

Iliana's voice echoes out from somewhere within the crowd,
amplified by the bowl formation of the encampment.

ILIANA (o.s.)

I knew you were jealous, Essk. But
I never thought you would stoop
this low.

The gathered Ascendants gasp, looking around for the source
of the voice. Whispers continue to spread. Essk puffs
himself up to his greatest height of importance. He is
scared, but determined to go on with what he believes is
right.

ESSK

Jealousy is my least concern,
Mistress. I know where you have
been. I know with whom you have
been speaking.

Iliana makes her way through the crowd, strolling, not
concerned in the least. The crowd parts to let her through.

ILIANA

Your own fear and mistrust has led
you to spy on me. I feel sorry for
you, Cardinal.

ESSK

Fear for yourself, Mistress. Hear me, children of the True. This woman, who claims to light the path to the Fortress, has even today consorted with the heretics who block that path.

Gasps of amazement around the crowd as Essk goes on...

ESSK

Do you deny it, Iliana? I heard it with my own ears, as you held your secret meeting with the Bajoran woman, Kira. You spoke of meeting her before. Of yet more races who shame the True with their false names. I heard you say you do not wish her dead.

All this adds more confusion to the crowd of Ascendants. But Iliana cuts through it with style and grace.

ILIANA

Do you hear that, Ascendants? The fear in his voice? He knows he speaks heresy. But he is so scared of losing his position, of losing your love, that he is willing to keep you from your rightful place in the Fortress simply to remain your Cardinal.

ESSK

No! She lies to you!

ILIANA

Will you allow him to keep you from the Fortress, Ascendants? Will you let him desecrate the very point of your existence for his own selfish purposes?

At the back of the crowd, Raiq shouts out loud.

RAIQ

Never!

Other knights begin to pick up the sentiment, repeating Raiq's oath. The crowd is turning against Essk, and he knows it. By now Iliana has reached the dais at the centre.

ILIANA

What do we do to those who have lost faith? To the heretics who profess faith, but have none?

BLAS

They die and burn!

ROARS of approval from the crowd. Essk's golden, segmented eyes flare in panic. Iliana turns to him, the baying crowd at her back, and smiles.

ILIANA

Then bring the stake!

Before Essk can protest any further, knights rush forward from the crowd, religious bloodlust inflamed. They GRAB Essk roughly and drag him off the dais. They bring him in front of the crowd, hold him still.

By some unseen means, a gleaming silver stake BURSTS out of the ground. A knight waves a hand - silver metallic ropes coil out from the stake and grab Essk by the arms and legs. They tighten, pulling him back against the stake.

He struggles in desperation, but there's nothing he can do. Their job done, the knights step back. The crowd roars, thrusting their burning spears to the sky. Essk shouts -

ESSK

Wait! You cannot do this! I am your Cardinal!

Iliana steps close to him, speaks confidentially.

ILIANA

They're not listening, Essk.

ESSK

Mistress... please...

ILIANA

Now you believe? Too late. The funny thing is, you actually played right into my hands.

(off Essk's confusion)

I deliberately cut you out, Essk. I raised Raiq above you precisely to make you jealous. And it worked like a charm.

ESSK

But... why?

ILIANA

To make sure they'll follow me. Once they see what happens to anyone who doubts me - even a Cardinal - they'll all follow me into the Fire without a thought. Because I am the Fire, Essk. And what does Fire do?

ESSK

(resigned)

It burns.

Iliana steps back. She makes eye contact with the weeping Cardinal. He knows this is the end. Iliana waves a hand...

And flames BURST into life around the stake. He SCREAMS as his flesh begins to crackle. The ROAR of the crowd grows, building to a fever pitch as they thrill to the sight of a heretic burning at the stake. The flames grow higher and higher, swallowing Essk completely, his agonised shrieks echoing off the stone walls of the encampment.

As the light of the flames flickers on Iliana's serenely smiling, watching face...

ILIANA (v.o.)

I'm coming for you next, Nerys.

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW